Road Map for Return

Guidance for a return to school during COVID-19
Phases of the Pandemic

Our current focus is on the “Transition” phase.

Transition
Best practices are established to address reasonable protection in the school environment and individual levels of comfort around returning.
Repopulating K-12 schools requires a holistic approach that promotes health and safety without compromising students’ learning potential.
Holistic Framework

HEALTH PROMOTION
Addresses indirect COVID-related challenges

EDUCATION ADAPTATION
Addresses learning & teaching challenges during pandemic

RISK MITIGATION
Addresses transmission & survival of Sars-CoV-2 in K-12 Facilities
Risk Mitigation

Strategies for reducing COVID-19 transmission and cross-contamination through design, disinfection and cleaning.

Student at Yangzheng Primary School in China
Educational Adaptation

These strategies promote effective learning and teaching in this new normal through behavioral, logistical, and technology changes.

→ South Korea Reopens Schools
Health Promotion

Strategies that promote physical and mental health, social cohesion, and a sense of belonging and safety.

Teacher holds a music lesson outdoors in Randers, Denmark
## Example Timeline

### Steps for Repopulating Schools

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<th>Risk Mitigation</th>
<th>Education Adaptation</th>
<th>Health Promotion</th>
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<td><strong>Starting Now</strong></td>
<td>Example: Adjust schedule by classroom Create protocol for drop-off/pick-up Adapt large spaces for learning</td>
<td>Establish food service protocols Survey students for health concerns Identify COVID officer. Outline Social Emotional care.</td>
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<td>Determine capacity of classrooms Identify addition space needs Confirm cleaning/disinfecting and design protocols</td>
<td>Implement design measures for compliance.</td>
<td>Implement SEL practices</td>
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<td>Summer</td>
<td>Establish flexible attendance Mark hallway flow Blended classrooms (virtual/in-person)</td>
<td>Increase services &amp; counselors available</td>
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<td>Fall</td>
<td>Limit technology sharing Limit external volunteers Provide PPE protocols Outdoor recess/PE</td>
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How do you go back to school safely?

**Establish policies** that promote learning, health & safety

 Communicate with your community & get feedback

 Procure & Implement plan for returning to school

Return to School

Perkins&Will
We cannot remove all risks.

Home
- Working parents
- Social engagements
- Multi-generational living

Transit to School
- Public transportation
- School bus density / contamination

Entering School
- Contaminated high touch surfaces
- Fail to socially distance
- Public spaces (bathrooms, lockers, lobby, etc.)

Teaching Spaces
- Surface contamination
- Recirculating air
Strategies at Every Level

Individual
- Personal Protection
- Behavioral

Room Specific
- Social Distancing
- Reduce Surface Contamination

School-wide
- Air Quality Improvements
- Scheduling
- Reduce High-Touch Surfaces

District or State-Level
- Shelter-in-place Policies
- District Building Closures
Mindset

It’s not this . . .

. . . but this
Capacity Guidelines
Physical Distancing Capacity Guidelines

A. Instructional Spaces
   1. General Classrooms
   2. Science
   3. Art
   4. Etc.

B. Administrative Spaces
   1. Offices
   2. Conference Rooms

C. Common Spaces
   1. Cafeteria
   2. Auditorium
   3. Gym
   4. Corridors
   5. Building Entry

D. Other Spaces
   1. Bus
“Select strategies based on feasibility given the unique space and needs of the school. Not all strategies will be feasible for all schools.”

-CDC, “Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs”
Capacity Analysis Process

Classroom Capacity
# of student desks with physical distancing guidelines

Current Schedule
# of students scheduled to be in class during each period

Shortfall
# of students who don’t fit in the classroom after accounting for physical distancing

Next Step: Strategies
Options for making up the shortfall, either by new delivery models or creating additional instruction space
Capacity and adaptation decisions

Is there enough space for the class in its assigned room? **No**

Is there an unscheduled room that can fit the enrollment? **Yes**

Is the furniture & space in the available room appropriate for the age of the student? **Yes**

Do you have the faculty and/or technology education adaptation measures to teach in this new environment?  

Proceed as scheduled

Add to shortfall and consider capacity strategies

Add to shortfall and consider capacity strategies

Add to shortfall and consider capacity strategies
Instructional Spaces
Classroom Layout Guidelines

Space student desks 6’ apart to support recommended CDC physical distancing guidelines

Minimum
For schools with lower infection risk or greater capacity need
• Provide a 6’ radius around all student desks when students are in a stationary **seated position**.
• The 6’ radius around each desk **can include circulation** space required to access each desk. Students may need to pass through the 6’ area on the way to their desk.

More Ideal Scenario
For schools with higher infection risk or lower capacity need
• Provide a 6’ radius around all student desks **at all times**
• Provide an **aisle** between each 6’ radius so students can circulate through the room without encroaching on another student’s 6’ radius
• Greatly reduces classroom capacity but minimizes risk of physical proximity
Classroom Layout Guidelines for COVID Transition

Designate a sanitation station near the door with hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, paper towels, and a waste bin.

Provide 6' of clear teaching space at the front.

Consider a plexiglass shield at the teacher’s desk. Note: some state governments have suggested that the teacher face the same direction i.e. away from the students. We are evaluating whether this is feasible for teaching and classroom management.

Consider removing desks directly in front of the teacher station (or protect teacher station with plex barrier).

Where possible, place desks against the wall to maximize capacity and reduce risk of physical proximity on one side.

Option: Create a zone to stack unused chairs and desks that have been removed.

Use tape, stickers, and signage to indicate traffic flow, physical distances, and unused desks.

Remove non-essential objects, manipulatives, and books from rooms to aid in cleaning procedures.
How much is classroom capacity reduced?

EXAMPLE: In a typical high school / middle school classroom...

### Pre-pandemic
900 SF (30’x30’)
No social distancing
28 students

### Minimum requirements
900 SF (30’x30’)
6’ distancing when seated
Circulation passes through 6’ radius
15 students (-46%)

### Ideal Scenario
900 SF (30’x30’)
6’ distancing at all times
Circulation does not pass within 6’ radius
9 students (-68%)

Perkins&Will
Studying a variety of classroom sizes and dimensions resulted in an **average 46 SF per student** in classrooms with 6’ social distancing between desks without dedicated aisles. Efficiencies will vary based on classroom dimensions, obstructions, and configurations.
Classroom Usage Guidelines

• Have students **enter and exit the room in order** of their desk’s distance from the door to minimize passing in close physical distance

• **Disinfect student desks** before and after each use. Involve students in the disinfection process.

• **Disinfect teacher desks** between every class period if teachers are rotating between classrooms

• Expect students to break the rules of physical distancing in the classroom, either on purpose or by accident
For Reference: RE-populated Classroom Images from Other Countries

**Germany**
Aisle marks on the floor and desks against the wall

**Germany**
Alternating occupied and unoccupied desks

**China**
Students wear hats to promote distance

**Copenhagen**
Wide aisles and spaced out desks in Copenhagen
Administrative Spaces
Offices

- Provide 6’ distance around all occupied seats
- Depending on the size of the office, guest chairs may be unusable

6 ft. radius circle is placed at a practical stationary work position (chair location will vary on plans)

Diagrams shown are reference examples. Analysis of your specific furniture may differ.
Conference Rooms

- Provide 6’ distancing between all conference seats when in use
- Mark available and unavailable positions on the table using tape or signage
Consider shield guards at reception.

Reception Congestion Points:

- Entry / Exit Door
- Reception Desk
- Closet
- Waiting Area
- Sanitation Station
- Nearest Restroom
Shared Spaces
Cafeteria

Layout

• Provide 6' distance around all occupiable seats

• Mark available and unavailable positions on the tables using tape and/or signage

• Add shields at payment and checkout points

• Consider creating instructional areas in the cafeteria to increase the teaching capacity of the facility

• Designate sanitizing and handwashing areas

• Post signage reminding students of healthy behaviors and handwashing

Operations

• Have students eat in their classrooms if possible

• Provide single individually wrapped portions

• Use only disposable wares
Cafeteria

PRE-PANDEMIC
Typical 30" x 12' folding table
Capacity 12/table
100%

SOCIAL DISTANCING
Typical 30" x 12' folding table
Capacity 3/table
25% pre-pandemic capacity

SOCIAL DISTANCING
Typical 36" x 12' folding table
Capacity 4/table
33% pre-pandemic capacity

SOCIAL DISTANCING
Typical 60" folding table
Capacity 2/table
25% pre-pandemic capacity

SOCIAL DISTANCING
Typical 60" folding table
Slightly overlapping circles
Capacity 3/table
37% pre-pandemic capacity
Gym

- Whenever possible, **hold PE classes outside** to allow for maximum physical distance between students
- Avoid any activities that would bring students into close **physical contact**
- Due to the level of movement and heavier breathing, **increase the distance** between students to 10’
- Mark **visual indicators** on the floor and/or walls to illustrate 10’ increments
- Consider **repurposing** the gym for instructional space for teaching/virtual learning to increase the teaching capacity of the building as large events will not likely be taking place
- **Disinfect** equipment after each use
- Avoid activities that would require multiple students to touch or **handle the same equipment** (e.g. basketball)
- Provide sanitizing areas and access to handwashing
- Post signage reminding students of healthy behaviors and handwashing
Corridors & Commons

- Maintaining distances of 6’ between students in corridors may not be feasible for all schools
- Mark 6’ distances on the floor and/or walls to provide visual indicators for students and teachers as they move through the corridor
- If possible, **discontinue the use of lockers** and cubbies until physical distancing recommendations have been lifted
- If it is not possible to discontinue the use of lockers, determine which students have lockers 6’ apart and **schedule times for locker access** based on where student lockers are located
- Post **signage** reminding students of healthy behaviors and handwashing
- Provide **sanitizing stations** throughout
- DO NOT institute any corridor usage policies or circulation paths that would disrupt **emergency egress routes** or prevent students from seeking the nearest exit, or confuse students in the event of an emergency
Corridors

Create **visual cues** to help students maintain physical distances:

- Mark a centerline down the middle of the corridor on the floor
- Mark paths on the floor 6’ apart on either side of the centerline
- Mark 6’ intervals along the floors and/or walls

Width Varies
Theater

- If seating is loose, arrange seats to maintain 6’ separation
- If seating is fixed, mark or block off seats as unavailable to maintain 6’ separation
- Refer to government guidelines for gathering sizes and numbers of attendees for an event
- Consider repurposing areas of the auditorium for instructional space until physical distancing guidelines are lifted, as large events will not likely be taking place
- Provide sanitizing stations throughout
- Post signage reminding students of healthy behaviors and handwashing
Theater

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Blythewood High School
Pre-Covid Capacity = 495
Social Distancing Capacity = 77 (15.5%)
Theater

Johnston High School
Pre-Covid Capacity = 1,156
Social Distancing Capacity = 162 (14%)
Bus Capacity
School Bus Capacity

- Maintain 6’ separation between students
- Carefully consider loading and unloading sequence (first student on sits in furthest back seat and is the last student to exit the bus)
- Consider signage or some other means to mark desired seating locations and to restrict access to unused seats
- Typical school buses are nominally 8’ wide, length varies depending on row spacing and capacity
- Wearing of masks while on bus should be considered
- Disinfect between routes
- Consult bus manufacturer for possible ways to shield driver.
- Prepare for increased parent drop-off and pick-up, encourage walking and biking

Pre-pandemic Seating
71 students

Social Distancing Seating
No overlap in circles
8 students

Semi-Social Distancing Seating
Overlap in circles
12 students

Diagrams based on standard BlueBird 71 capacity bus
Environmental Messaging
Graphic Approach

Plan Analysis

Custom Graphics

New Protocols
Graphic Approach

Distancing – Circulation

Distancing – Floor Graphic

Stay in your lane
Capacity Analysis
Guiding Questions / Discussion Starters

• What are the capacity goals? (maximize attendance, maximize safety, etc.)

• With the published guidelines (CDC and others) in mind, what is the desired physical separation for students while seated in an instructional space?

• Should classroom aisles be incorporated? If so, width?

• How might the use of specialized spaces (art, music, PE, locker rooms, tech ed, CTE, science, etc.) at ES, MS, HS levels contribute to capacity?

• Have you discussed alternate schedule strategies that impact where and how much capacity will be necessary?

• Furniture type will have an impact. Do you know what is in your buildings?
Our recommendations are advisory and intended to assist as you plan for the return to school. Guidance is evolving and we urge you to regularly consult with the following sources:

- World Health Organization
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- Federal, State, and Local Guidance

Version 1.0 is based on recommendations and guidance provided by these sources as of May 20, 2020.
We are in this together.